463 possess tea and coffee estates of their own. The rising
• 197 generation are, to some extent, learning Tamil and English, in addition to their own language, which is said to resemble old Canarese. And I have heard a youthful Badaga, tending a flock of sheep, address an errant
871 member thereof in very fluent Billingsgate. There were,
[877] in 1904–1905, thirty-nine Badaga schools, which were attended by 1,222 pupils. In 1907, one Badaga had passed the Matriculation of the Madras University, and was a clerk in the Sub-judge's Court at Ootacamund.

182 A newspaper discussion was carried on a few years ago as to the condition of the Badagas, and whether they are a down-trodden tribe, bankrupt and impoverished to such a degree that it is only a short time before something must be done to ameliorate their condition, and save them from extermination by inducing them to
(166) emigrate to the Wynād and Vizagapatam. A few have, in recent years, migrated to the Anaimalai hills, to work on the planters' estates, which have been opened up there. One writer stated that "the tiled houses, costing from Rs. 250 to Rs. 500, certainly point to their pros-
426 perity. They may frequently borrow from the Labbai to enable them to build, but, as I do not know of a single case in which the Labbai has ever seized the house and sold it, I believe this debt is soon discharged.
241 The walled-in, terraced fields immediately around their villages, on which they grow their barley and other grains requiring rich cultivation, are well worked, and
527 regularly manured. The coats, good thick blankets, and gold ear-rings, which most Badagas now possess, can only, I think, point to their prosperity, while their constant feasts, and disinclination to work on Sundays, show that the loss of a few days' pay does not affect
181 them. On the other hand, a former Native official on

1: Thurston & Rangachari E,G-4,5 (no date) 1909
AW50 Badaga AW50

539 ruler attempted to ravish the girl, whom the brother saved from him by flight. They settled down near the present village of Bethalhada. After a short stay there, the brothers separated, and settled in different parts of the Nīlgiris, which they peopled. Concerning the second brother, Hethappa, who had two daughters, the story goes that, during his absence on one occasion, two Todas forced their way into his house, ravished his wife, and possessed themselves of his wordly effects. Hearing of what had occurred, Hethappa sought the assistance of two Balayaru in revenging himself on the Todas. They readily consented to help him, in return for a promise that they should marry his daughters. The Todas were killed, and the present inhabitants of the village Hulikallu are supposed to be the descendants of the Balayaru and Badaga girls. The seven brothers are now worshipped under the name Hethappa or Hetha.

174 In connection with the migration of the Badagas to the Nīlgiris, the following note is given in the Gazetteer [175] of the Nīlgiris. "When this flitting took place there is little to show. It must have occurred after the foundation of the Lingāyat creed in the latter half of the twelfth century, as many of the Badagas are Lingāyats by faith, and sometime before the end of the sixteenth century, since in 1602 the Catholic priests from the west coast found them settled on the south of the plateau, and observing much the same relations with the Todas as subsist to this day. The present state of our knowledge does not enable us to fix more nearly the date of the [197] migration. That the language of the Badagas, which is a form of Canarese, should by now have so widely altered from its original as to be classed as a separate dialect argues that the movement took place nearer the twelfth than the sixteenth century. On the other hand, the

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

538 nature, are cited to explain the beginning of particular lineages or villages. The political tales explain the origin of villages and the emergence of various village officials. The accounts of who settled which place now explain the pattern of exogamy within the community. A fourth group of legends embrace all sorts of events and arrangements resulting from Badagas' contact with the Toda, Kota and Kurumba tribes indigenous to the area. These legends validate the whole system of economic interdependence which has held these groups rigidly together for so long and has led to a minimum division of labour within the Badaga community.

173 Here are the quasi-historical events Badagas have chosen to remember. Yet the one great event of their past not clearly recalled now is the actual flight from Mysore. They are explicit that their ancestors did not all come to the Nilgiris at the same time, and yet many nowadays claim they had been refugees fleeing from Tippu Sultan. So vague are people about their ancestors' flight that the only legend I have located on the subject is obviously coloured by a nineteenth-century borrowing from the Book of Exodus. It tells how the Badagas, hotly pursued by Moslem soldiers, came to the Moyar River, the northern limit of the district, at which point the waters opened up and enabled them to pass. As one might guess the pursuers were all drowned when the river closed up again behind the Badagas.

175 While it may be true that the latest arrivals were fleeing from Tippu or the four Mysore Wars, the great bulk of the people were refugees from earlier scourges or were purposely brought to settle the hills. The 370 villages in which they now live were virtually all in existence when the British first settled there a mere twenty years after Tippu's death. By the start of the nineteenth century the Badagas were consolidated as a Nilgiri society and their work of colonization completed.

174 For the early days of their settlement we fortunately have the [175] independent record of an Italian priest who visited the Nilgiris ● (197) in 1603 and met both Badagas and Todas there. When we couple this fact with the linguistic evidence that Badagas speak an archaic dialect of Kannada, it becomes most likely that the first major wave of refugees arrived as the Moslem hordes were destroying the great Hindu empire of Vijayanagar in Karnataka in 1565. There is no doubt that this was the direction from which the Badagas came. Aside from speaking a dialect of Kannada, their very name means 'northerner', and their adherence to the

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

The Migration from Mysore

There is no doubt that before they settled in the Nilgiris the homeland of the Badagas lay in the Mysore Plain. Their own legends as well as those of the Kotas are quite explicit on this point, and some of the clans are even able to identify places in Mysore whence their ancestors came. (The most northerly village they now inhabit is still within Karnataka State.)

One need look no further than their language for confirmation of the legend. There are six discernible dialects of Baḍagu that we identify as Standard, Wodea, Kumba:ra-Be:da, Kundena:ḍu, Wainad and Ha:sanu:ru. The dialects are differentiated as much by vocabulary as by phonology and are demonstrably variant forms of Kannada speech. No linguist has ever claimed anything other than this for Baḍagu, since it and the Kannada of Mysore are, with some effort, mutually intelligible.

The very name *Baḍaga* is usually cited as prime evidence of their origin to the north of the Nilgiris:[1] the Kannada word *baḍaga* means 'northerner'. It also has the meaning 'servant'. If we postulate that the name derives from Kannada *baḍaka* instead, then we have the additional meanings 'lean, thin, feeble man' or 'a man who beats and bangs' (Kittel, 1894, 1068-1073). There are thus four possible etymologies for the name. The last two meanings verge on the scurrilous, however, and would hardly have been used by the immigrants in self-identification. One would expect such epithets to be applied to immigrants only by some other group, perhaps the Todas had they known Kannada; yet Todas now call

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

Author	*Date of publication*	*Estimate*
John Sullivan	1819 (p. liv)	'about 300 years ago'
Benjamin Ward	1821 (p. lxx)	'about four centuries ago'
Thomas Baber	1830 (p. 315)	'about three centuries ago'
Henry Harkness	1832 (pp. 105–106)	'about six generations ago, during the anarchy which succeeded upon the downfall of the Vijayanagara empire.' i.e., 1565
Harry Congreve	1847 (p. 122)	'six generations ago'
John Ouchterlony	1848 (p. 81)	'3 or 4 centuries ago'
John Dulles	1855 (pp. 458–459)	'six generations since'
George Pope	1879 (p. 346, note)	"Many fled . . . in 1603"
William Stokes	1883b (p. 288)	'about 322 years ago'
Harold Stuart	1893 (p. 243)	'about three centuries ago'
Hanna Rhiem	1900 (p. 498, trans.)	'about three hundred years ago'
Edmond Périé	1933 (p. 97, trans.)	'some 350 years . . . when the Vijayanagar Empire collapsed'
M.K. Belli Gowder	1938–41 (pp. 5–8)	'seven hundred years back', or 'from 1300 to 1600'
N. Kariabettan	1958b (p. 2, trans)	'in the 11th Century'

It will be seen that nearly all of these authorities place the migration in the sixteenth century, which was when the Vijayanagar Empire (covering roughly Karnataka) broke up. M.K. Belli Gowder correctly dismisses the oft-mentioned ravages of Tippu Sultan in the late eighteenth century as a cause of the migration and instead suggests that the Moslem invasion responsible was that of Malik Kafur, the Sultan Ala-ud-din's favourite slave, who laid waste the Hoysala kingdom in 1311? Kariabettan, another modern Badaga writer, presents no evidence whatever for his eleventh century dating and is not to be relied upon.

Linguistic Evidence

No competent study of Badagu has yet been completed, but

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) · 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

Dravidian scholars have noted its similarity to medieval Kannada; in particular the two forms of *r* in Baḍagu phonology reportedly 'had dropped out of use [i.e., in Kannada literature] prior to the time of the grammarian Késirája, who lived in the thirteenth century'.[6]

Other Historical Evidence

Here a small digression on mining is pertinent. Finds of Roman coinage in burials on the Wainad and Nilgiri Plateaux and in numerous hordes on the Coimbatore Plain suggest that traders with Rome were actively exploiting the gold mines of this area. We find no mention of gold from this region, however, in the (A.D. 100) *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea.* That there was indeed a native population in the Nilgiris and Wainad in the first millennium A.D. is indicated by the many cinerary burials of this period on the hilltops; several of these contained Roman coins. There is also a reference in the Tamil classic *Silappadikāram* to the Chera king Seṅguṭṭuvaṉ attending a dance performance at Nilagiri with his army. (*Silappadikāram:* Vañjikaṇḍam, Kālkōṭ Kadai, xxvi, verses 85, 105, 120. See also Breeks, 1973; Grigg, 1880; Das, 1957; Naik, 1966; Hockings, 1975; Noble, 1976.)

Gold workings in the Nilgiri Wainad undoubtedly date back over many centuries:

> There are miles of country where almost every stone has been turned over, hillsides entirely sluiced away, mountain slopes simply honey-combed with shafts, remains of old aqueducts, adits, and bunds.... The existing caste of gold workers are the Korumbars, but they confine themselves entirely to alluvial washings. When questioned they tell you of a tradition... of hillmen called Vehdahs,... by whose hands all these wonderful quarryings were carried out (Sewell, 1882, 224).

The cinerary burials and Wainad gold mines have nothing to do with Badaga history, aside from a possibility that the chieftains of Ummattu:r fortified Nelliala before coming to the Nilgiri Plateau because they were engaged in gold mining thereabouts.

More relevant perhaps are accounts of old workings on the Nilgiris around Ootacamund and Naṉjana:ḍu. Midway between the two places, on One Cairn Hill, there was apparently a

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

615 Cinna Kunnu:r (on the northern edge of the Nilgiris). Traditionally these were the Wodeas of Maduve clan, who had previously been *Jangama* priests. When other Wodeas arrived from Tagadu:r they formed a separate clan called Ko:ve:ru, as they were of that sept. Yet other Wodeas came to the Nilgiris from a monastery at Saragu:r, and since that was a village in the former Hindu kingdom of Kongu this particular clan of Wodeas have ever since been nicknamed Kongaru ('Kongu people') by other Badagas. Later on, when Tippu's troops seized the Nilgiri fortress of Male Ko:te, an Ummattu:r outpost, the Wodeas who were dependent on its chiefs were reportedly left destitute, but they remained in the hills.[14]

194 • 197 The relative recency of this Wodea migration derives some support from Badagu dialectology. As I have mentioned, there are six dialects of the language, three of these seemingly distinctive by reason of geography: speakers living in the Kundena:du, Ha:sanu:ru and Wainad areas used to be quite isolated from the rest of the community, a situation that would encourage the growth of separate dialects in the course of several centuries. The distinction of Wodea and of Kumba:ra-Be:da from Standard Badagu cannot, however, be explained in geographic terms, for the Wodeas, Kumba:ras and Be:das live in and beside villages where Standard Badagu is spoken. Only by postulating that these three groups arrived speaking a more modern form of Kannada than the earlier immigrants who spoke a medieval variety can we account 615 for this disparity. Their own legend fully bears out this hypothesis: they claim to have all come to the hills together in the service of an Ummattu:r chieftain when the Gaudas had already arrived, the Wodeas as Lingayat priests, the Kumba:ras as palace servants, the Be:das as huntsmen and tribute collectors. Not only do the Wodeas claim descent from the royal house, however (Metz, 1864, 48-49; Grigg, 1880, 220; Natesa Sastri, 1892, 754-755); the Kumba:ras also maintain they 'belonged to' the ruling family of Chamaraj Wodeya, though they probably had a servile rather than a kin relationship, particularly as this phratry is Shaivite (not Lingayat), while the royal family has been Vaishnavite since 1610. 197 198 The fact that the Wodeas have a dialect distinct from Kumba:ra-Be:da is to be explained by class distinctions. As in many parts of India the orthodox, vegetarian, high-status Woderu priests spoke differently from the low status, meat-eating servants of the chieftain for the two did not intermarry or mix socially.

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

177 much less effective as a source of news than is the press. It was also
204 found that the farther away from towns respondents live, the less information they get from friends and the more from newspapers:
[203] only for items of local news are friends everywhere more effective
[197] than newspapers as channels of communication. When a Tamil newspaper reaches a village it commonly circulates and is read aloud to a much larger number of people than one copy could reach in a town. The wide circulation of papers and the presence of well-educated men even in out-of-the-way villages helps explain the unusually high levels of knowledge about the world beyond the Nilgiris that Badagas now command.

NETWORKS OF COMMUNICATION

203 Beside the traditional marriage and exchange networks which supplied Badagas with their basic needs, there have always been social networks through which important information has passed by word of mouth. These have been modified and amplified in the present century and have become linked to some extent with the mass media (on networks, see Hockings, 1977, *passim*).

In Hulla:da, a typical Badaga village, there are now four types of network: intra-village, inter-village, inter-tribal and a new type, village-and-town. Each of these categories can be subdivided according to the following outline.

Intra-Village Networks

208 There were in 1963 several different adult male *loci* for decision
621 making and opinion formation. The most important here, as in nearly every village, were these:

(1) the traditional council, and especially the village headman;
(2) the festival committee;
(3) elders of the four indigenous lineages and of a fifth composite group of more recently settled families;
(4) three middle-aged, influential men;
(5) the local Swatantra Party organizer;
(6) the educated young men.

[476] Two or three of these groupings may operate together in popular-
[203] izing an idea or solving a problem that faces the village. In a class by

41 Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

of a sociologist, is that—unlike most communities on the subcontinent—the Badagas can be categorized neither as tribe nor as caste. To be precise, they are refugees drawn from several castes in southern Mysore centuries ago, who then consolidated themselves into a community on the Nilgiri Massif and to some extent may have then emulated the social organization of the neighbouring Toda tribe (Hockings 1979a).

The very name *Badaga* means "northerner" in their language, and was clearly applied to them only after they had fled from the plains immediately to the north of the Nilgiris. The reason for this flight is made quite clear in their legends: in A.D. 1565 the Vijayanagar Empire was destroyed by Muslims invading from the north. The ancestral Badagas, fearing for the safety of their womenfolk, fled to the Nilgiris and adopted a tribal type of dress for both sexes. In 1603 a certain Father Finicio, the first European visitor, encountered them on this plateau. He described them (in Portuguese) as as Badegas, and gave the impression that they then numbered 500 to 1,000 people and inhabited no more than three villages (Finicio 1603). Already they had quite a varied mixed-farming economy. The most remarkable accomplishment of the Badagas has been the consummate success with which the community has adapted to and multiplied in surroundings that were initially wild and strange for them, and which lay at an elevation 3,000 to 5,000 feet higher than did their ancestral villages on the Mysore Plain. Their agricultural success has been partly due to their adoption of foreign techniques. Typically European crops are commonly grown today on terraces made with the help of machines. The fields are nourished with artificial fertilizers and the harvest is transported in lorries. These improved techniques have led to a better standard of living and a tendency for fathers to provide their sons with the education that they missed themselves. In the four main towns of the Massif there is now a sizeable Badaga middle class, and many of the men are doctors, lawyers, teachers, or government officials. Although still largely a rural people, speaking a distinct but unwritten Dravidian language, Badagas now have an unusually high rate of literacy in both Tamil and English.

Previous Studies

1.3. It is possible to show in considerable detail how the Badaga

631 District has been divided.

The Inhabitants of the Nilgiris

000 An inscription at Chamrajnagar (near Mysore), dated to 1117 A.D., claims that a Hoysala minister entered the Nilgiris and "frightened the Todas" (Derrett 1957: 47). In 1124 another petty ruler attacked Kulkala, which is perhaps a Kota settlement (kôkîl in the Kota language) on the Nilgiri Plateau (Derrett 1957: 60). These two dates provide a terminus ante quem for the settlement of the Toda and perhaps the Kota tribes on the hills.

175 In 1602 or 1603 a Portuguese priest visited the plateau -- the first Euro-
177 pean known to have done so -- and reported in a letter to his superior on his en-
counters with the Todas and Badagas (Fenicio 1603). And although the jungle
174 tribes of Kurumbas and Irulas are not mentioned in any source prior to Buchanan's report of 1807, there is no ethno-historical reason to suppose that they have not also been in the Nilgiris for at least as long as the Badagas.

The whole question of the origins of these tribes is undemonstrable archaeologically and quite irrelevant to this study. There is however very strong evidence to support the common belief that the Badagas were not originally a tribe at all (in the popular usage of that word), but rather were descendants of various wanderers or refugees from the old kingdom of Mysore who settled down in the Nilgiris during the period 1400-1800, and were thereby obliged through social pressures to behave like a tribe amongst tribes. The nature of this "tribalization" process will be discussed in the following chapter. Both their origin in Mysore and their complex contacts with the indigenous Nilgiri tribes
• 197 have molded Badaga culture and social organization markedly. The Badagas still speak a dialect of the Kannada language; whereas the Todas and Kotas each have

197 their own Dravidian language, and the Irulas and Kurumbas speak what are recognizable as dialects of Tamil.

175 From the year 1820 the British began to settle on the plateau (Ward 1821:
177 hill), bringing with them a motley train of Tamilian, Mysorean, Malabari and other dependents, including a few half-breeds. With this contact much of Southern India began to learn about the strange people, hardly Hindus, who inhabited these hills. Immigrants began to find laboring jobs in the tea and coffee plantations that were started there from the 1830's onward; and in the process of taking up this new occupation they brought the Nilgiri tribes into closer contact
177 with the traditions and practices of South Indian village Hinduism. Today the plantations are the major source of the District income, and attract an ever-increasing number of migrant laborers from various parts of Southern India.

161 In the 1951 Census the most populous communities in the District, distinguished on a language basis, were the following:

Indigenous Plateau Groups:

Badagas	67,251
Irulas, Kurumbas, etc.	1,786
Todas (including Christian Todas)	879
Total:	69,916

Immigrant Groups:

Tamilians	119,045
Malayalis	41,461
Kanarese	40,241
Telugus	26,469
Total:	227,216

(Source -- Arputhanathan 1953: 60)

For some unexplained reason the 1300-odd Kotas are not listed at all; presumably they were included in the Badaga total (since they probably spoke Badagu to the census-takers).

175 (Grigg 1880: 228, 268-69). Whatever the details of their migration may be, it is
(167) known that no further Badagas arrived from Mysore after the first English report mentioning the Nilgiri peoples (Buchanan 1807: 246-47). They have been consolidated as a community for at least two centuries (Anonymous 1819: liv-lv; Macpherson 1820: lix; Ward 1821: lxx-lxxi). Furthermore the system of socio-
178 cultural interdependence which linked the Badagas with the other tribal groups there at the beginning of the 20th Century did not differ greatly from the situation as it was sketchily recorded in 1603 (Fenicio 1603: 723). In general therefore we
101 can say that the Badagas were Kanarese-speaking agriculturists who settled in the
• 199 Nilgiris from perhaps six until two centuries ago, and who were there consolidated into a tribe-like community interacting with the other local tribes.

433 Records indicate that until about 1860 or 1870 the Badagas were slash-and-burn cultivators as well as settled farmers (cf. Grigg 1880: 315-17, 321; Francis 1908: 4; Thurston 1909: I, 78-79). Those who ate meat were also in the
241 habit of hunting, until some 30 years ago. After 1860 the British administration
(657) wanted the peasants to remain on the same tracts of farmland; whereupon they gradually took to cultivating European vegetables, particularly the potato, which
241 they sold for cash in the town markets (Metz 1864: 153-54). Since 1957 a series
439 of crop failures caused by a potato disease has prompted the Badagas to turn more and more to the cultivation of tea and coffee, products which are also sold locally for cash. In the past the food needs of these villagers have been satisfied by the cultivation of millets; but since about 1920 it has been more common for them to purchase rice as a staple, using money brought in by the potato, tea or coffee sales (Ranga 1934: 68).

262 Dairy produce is an essential part of the Badaga diet. Nearly every

6: Noble K-4,5 (1962-1963) 1989
(1800-1963)

AW50 Badaga AW50
Irula AW53
Kota AW55
Kurumba AW56
Toda AW60

000 dropping 3,080 feet in altitude to a powerhouse in the Mysore Ditch, together with a dammed reservoir and powerhouse in the Moyar River valley, are the main features of the last-mentioned scheme (Nambiar 1965: 26-27).

B I Ko Ku T 161 The five ethnic groups. In 1871, when the first controlled census was taken, the Badagas, Irulas, Kotas, Kurumbas, and Todas formed about two-fifths of the population in the Nilgiri District (Hunter 1886, 10: 308). By 1961, however, the immigration of other people had lowered this fraction to about one-sixth (Nambiar 1965: 8, 10, 254). In the 1871-1961 period the following population changes took place among the five ethnic groups (Grigg et al. 1880: 30; Nambiar 1965: 8, 254):

Badagas: from over 15,000 to over 60,000 (estimated)[1]
Irulas: from 1,470 to 4,502
Kotas: from 1,112 to 832
Kurumbas: from 613 to 1,174
Todas: from 693 to 706

Ko 165 K4 The decrease in the number of Kotas is partially attributable to a smallpox epidemic.

B 144 197 771 101 The racially Caucasoid Badagas speak Badagu, worship Lord Shiva, and form an agricultural Hindu caste; most of them dwell above 6,000 feet on the Nilgiri massif, but there are some who inhabit the Wynaad Plateau (Figure 2).[2] Caucasic-Australoid Irulas of the Nilgiri District speak a Tamil dialect, are devotees of Ranga, and form a partly Hinduized agricultural caste; they inhabit eastern Nilgiri slopes.

I 144 197 771 The Irulas of Coimbatore District and Kerala State, who apparently are descended from the same ancestral stock as the Nilgiri District Irulas, are not covered in this study.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 7 1